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Subject: Fw: summary session 1 sustainable agri afa convenor
Date: November 14, 2014 10:40:15 AM GMT+08:00
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1 Attachment, 32 KB

Dear Sir Percy:

Here are Ms. Esther's valuable inputs to the session synthesis that you will finalize in the next couple of days.

Thanks to AFA, for their full support!

cheers

Bessie

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From: Esther Penunia (AFA) <estherpenunia@gmail.com> on behalf of Esther Penunia (AFA) <afaesther@asianfarmers.org>
Sent: Thursday, November 13, 2014 1:20 PM
To: Bessie M. Burgos; Avril DG. Madrid; Junette Dawn A. Baculfo
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How can the findings of the papers presented help promote the conference themes of improved resilience, equity and integration in Southeast Asian agriculture ?

The six agro ecological systems for rice production - conservation agriculture, holistic heritage of agriculture, integrated farming systems, integrated pest management, organic agriculture and system of rice intensification - contribute to 13 ecosystem services : diet diversity, carbon sequestration, cultural services, energy provision, genetic diversity, mitigation of greenhouse gases, pest control, resilience to climate disturbance, soil structure, fertility, erosion control, water quality, weed control, wild biodiversity and habitat provisioning. Moreover, these agro ecological systems empower farmers as scientists, researchers and innovators.

The rural youth comprise a large part of the population but they are not included in decision making processes ; and moreover, majority are not interested in agriculture. If we are able to attract a sufficient number of the youth to go into agriculture, then production of our food can be secured in the next generations. If we include them as key stakeholder in agriculture, then we promote equity .

What important new knowledge has been gained from the papers ? What knowledge gaps remain?

While we can say that these agro ecological systems are not new, it is good that there is renewed interest in it both at global and regional levels. During this International Year of Family Farming, many regional and international family farming organizations have called for investments in sustainable agro ecological approaches to agriculture with, by and for family farmings. Knowledge gaps include : other practices on agro ecological systems , especially those done by indigenous peoples and their "more scientific analysis " on the ecosystem services they render (e.g fish in rice-fish systems can provide a good source of protein for poor families , more explanations on how these relate to biodiversity). Also, it will be good to know the limitations of these systems or where best to apply these systems.

Also as we call for more investments in agriculture, a knowledge gap on the remittances of OFWs and how it can be channeled to agriculture remains.

What policy implications/recommendations may be drawn from the studies/papers presented :

If we can summarize in one sentence , it will be : There should be dramatic increase in investments by governments on agriculture . The bigger the investment, the bigger can be the gain.

The investments are to support in making agro-ecological family farming viable, resilient , productive; and make key stakeholders, particularly family farmers including the youth, to be significantly involved in agriculture research, extension, production and marketing.

A favorable policy environment to support the growth and uptake of these holistic agro-ecological farming systems is very necessary.

Investments will be in the arena also of :

- capacity building (e.g. produce quality rice through SRI, scholarship programs for young farmers);
- research (e.g. local indigenous systems , good practices of young farmers, monitoring mechanisms for the agroecological farming systems);
- extension (farmer focused extension services such as in farmer field schools);
- technical support (such as value addition techniques for young farmers, quality control of input services for rice farming, facilitation for trade and market links);
- finance and capital (e.g. soft loan for young farmers, how to tap remittances);
- organizational development (regional exchange programs for young farmers).
- curriculum development such that agriculture can have a more "positive face " and be attractive to the young.

